

How the QDR affects you

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WASHINGTON (AFNS) — During the past six months, we've engaged in a general review of our national defense. The first phase of this review, the Quadrennial Defense Review, is now complete and the results are in. They'll affect every member of the Air Force, and so it's important that we all understand what came out of this study.

The review looked at every element of the American military, across all the services: how we fight, how we support our forces, how we buy equipment and what forces this nation needs in the years ahead. From the beginning, we considered this a major opportunity for the Air Force. We have a great story to tell of what we do, how we do it, and how we plan to do it better in the future. Further, the work we had accomplished in our long-range planning effort over the past two years provided us with a plan for the QDR — a plan that we executed.

Objectives

We set some objectives as we began our work in this review: to continue our modernization, to sustain our readiness, to preserve the forces we need to execute our missions and to ensure we have the resources we need to achieve all that. And we wanted to ensure that everyone involved in decisions about deploying our

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forces understands the impact these decisions have on the Air Force — how these deployments affect our people and our readiness.

We accomplished all of our objectives. Our key modernization programs will be fielded, sustaining our world-class capabilities far into the next century. We'll sustain the readiness we need as we provide this nation the rapid global responsiveness that only air and space forces can. We will retain the forces, in the numbers and the quality needed, to execute our mission.

Inefficiency

We cannot afford any inefficiency if we are to achieve all this. So, we took a very aggressive look at how we support and operate our forces. We found a wide range of opportunities for more efficiencies, which we must take advantage of. Unless we take every possible approach toward improving our efficiency, we just cannot succeed in building the force we need to execute our missions in the future.

So, we have made the decision to accelerate the effort to transfer work from uniformed members to civilian or private sector employees where this can be done without hurting readiness. In some other cases, we

will cut manpower. If our experience is any guide, you can expect some very alarming headlines as these decisions are announced. Many of you will be rightfully concerned about the impact these changes will have on the Air Force, your careers and your families.

Though many of the details of the reductions remain to be worked out, we will execute any reductions, as far as possible, through voluntary programs. For both military and civilian reductions, we will use incentives first to encourage voluntary separations or retirements as we execute this drawdown.

Reduction plans

We are now structuring a plan for these reductions, based on a few basic principles. First, we'll protect manpower that directly contributes to achieving our core competencies. Second, our future Air Force will be capable and fully manned with trained and experienced people. Third, we'll provide robust transition programs and ample time for those who may leave the Air Force. We remain committed to taking care of our people through this process — both those who stay with us and those who leave the Air Force.

It is clear that we've gone

about as far as possible in doing more with less, in terms of our deployment schedules and the demands on our people. This review has gone a long way to highlighting the problems that operations tempo pose for our force, and we'll do everything possible to ensure that those problems are understood as deployments are planned and exercise programs are constructed.

These were tough decisions. We made them because we owe it to the nation to ensure that we can meet our responsibilities in the years ahead. We'll use the savings that we gain through these steps to fix underfunded programs and to protect our modernization programs from paying the bills for future contingency operations.

End result

In the end, we'll come out of this review a strong Air Force, ready for the missions we will face in the decades ahead. Through all the changes the Air Force has undergone in the past, there has been one constant: our people's commitment for excellence and for making the mission happen. Whatever changes may occur over the future, that will remain a constant.

The QDR was a milestone, not a destination. There will be much work and much time before these issues are resolved in detail. We will continue to ensure that you have the information you need as this process continues to unfold.

For more information on the QDR, visit the World Wide Web site at <http://www.dtic.mil:80/defenseink/topstory/quad.html>.

Action lines

From page 3

Thursdays and from 9 a.m. - noon
Saturdays.

Facilities combat airmen

I work at one of the food facilities on base and most of the people that work at these facilities are getting very tired of the drunk airmen coming in here on Saturday morning with their foul language and making a mess. They run out of here before we can call the security police. It's become a serious prob-

lem and I really think this is inappropriate.

Based on your call, we've increased our security force vigilance of your facility and alerted AAFES management of the situation. Additionally, we've alerted commanders who have dormitories in your facility area to brief their people appropriately. Unfortunately, not all Liberty team members view the base as THEIR community as well.

Snail mail from United States

In the past month, I have noticed that my mail from the states has been taking a long time to get to me. I spoke to the flight sergeant who said the only way they

could determine if this was the case, would be to use express mail. I have spoken to several other people who agree with me. Can you please tell me why our mail is taking so long to get to us from the states?

Problems have been identified in the transit time of mail to and from the United States; however the reasons are illusive. The HQ USAFE Air Postal Squadron at Ramstein AB Germany, is currently conducting surveys to identify problems. Please document specifics on your problem(s) regarding mail transit times on PS Form 4314-C (USPS Consumer Service Card) which will be forwarded to HQ USAFE. Meanwhile, to ensure quickest delivery, express mail is the best option.